

In the Claims

1-10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) A filter device, comprising:

a filter housing having first and second fluid connections and an exterior surface;

a filter element held in said filter housing;

a fluid container having an exterior surface and being located adjacent to and side-by-side with said filter housing to define a lateral space therebetween; and

a connector coupling said fluid connections to said fluid container, said connector having at least one longitudinally displaceable blocking part blocking said fluid connections in a blocking position thereof and opening said fluid connections in an open position thereof, said blocking part being located between and accessible from said exterior surfaces of said filter housing and said fluid container when said filter housing and said fluid container are coupled by said connector, said blocking part including a plate-shaped sliding valve part guided for movement between and sealed between first and second connecting plates of said connector by seals facing said filter housing and facing said fluid container, said connector with said blocking part being located in said lateral space with said filter housing and said fluid container being on opposite sides of said connector.

12. (previously presented) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein

said fluid container comprises a hydraulic tank.

13. (cancelled)

14. (currently amended) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein

said fluid connections comprise a fluid inlet and a fluid outlet in said filter housing;

said connecting plates comprise fluid passages corresponding to and forming part of said fluid connections; and

said blocking part has wall parts that cover said fluid connections in the blocking position and has openings that clear said fluid connections in the open position.

15. (currently amended) A filter device according to claim 14 wherein

said fluid inlet and said fluid outlet are located one of top of another in a direction of a longitudinal axis of said filter housing, and are adjacent one another and open directly on said exterior surface of said filter housing;

said fluid passages are located one on top of another in said direction of said longitudinal axis and are adjacent one another; and

said blocking part has clearance openings between said wall parts, said clearance openings being aligned and congruent with said fluid passages in the open position to convey fluid therethrough.

16. (previously presented) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein

said first and second fluid connection has first and second valves, respectively.

17. (currently amended) A filter device according to claim 16 wherein

said first fluid connection comprises a fluid outlet of said filter housing, with said first valve having a valve disk located on an outside of and over said fluid outlet and being independent of said blocking part; and

said fluid connection comprises a fluid inlet of said filter housing, with said second valve having a valve disk integrated within said filter inlet and being independent of said blocking part.

18. (previously presented) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein

said filter connections of said filter housing are encompassed on an outer peripheral side thereof by an attachment part; and

said connector has flange parts on a connecting plate thereof facing said attachment part, said connecting plate having fluid passages therein encompassed by said flange parts.

19. (currently amended) A filter device according to claim 18 wherein

said attachment part comprises a locking part received in an opening in one of said flange parts and in a recess in said blocking part in the open position, said locking part, said opening and said recess extending transversely to a movement direction of said blocking part.

20. (previously presented) A filter device according to claim 19 wherein

said locking device comprises a locking pin.

21. (currently amended) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein ~~each of said filter housing~~ comprises a handle for manual operation thereof; and said blocking part comprises a handle for manual operation thereof.
22. (previously presented) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein said filter housing comprises cast aluminum; and said blocking part comprises one of steel and plastic.
23. (currently amended) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein said blocking plate moves ~~translaterally~~ translationally between the blocking and open positions.
24. (previously presented) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein said fluid connections extend perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said filter housing.
25. (new) A filter device according to claim 11 wherein said blocking part has two openings and two wall parts.
26. (new) A filter device according to claim 25 wherein said two openings and said two wall parts are fixedly connected for simultaneous movement thereof only.